

# **Report to the North Carolina General Assembly**

**An Overview of Child Nutrition Programs  
administered by the  
NC Department of Public Instruction  
SL 2011-342 (SB 415), sec. 2**

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# How Child Nutrition Programs Operate

Congress



US Department of Agriculture



State Education Agency/Board of Education



School Food Authority (SFA)

District/Local Board of Education

# Child Nutrition Programs Administered by the NCDPI

National School Lunch Program

School Breakfast Program

After School Snack Program

Seamless Summer Option

for Summer Meals

Special Milk Program

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program



# National School Lunch Program (NSLP)

- ✓ Available to all public and non-profit private schools and residential child care institutions
- ✓ Provides nutritionally balanced, free, low-cost or subsidized meals to students of high school grade or lower during the school day
- ✓ SFAs receive cash subsidies and USDA Foods for each meal served
- ✓ Meals must meet Federal nutrition standards



# National School Lunch Program (NSLP)

- ✓ NSLP is available any child enrolled in a SFA
- ✓ Children from families with incomes at or below 130% of poverty are eligible for free meals
- ✓ Children from families with incomes between 130% - 185% of poverty are eligible for reduced-price meals (cost of the meal is \$ .40)
- ✓ Household size and income determine eligibility for free or reduced-price meals
- ✓ Income eligibility guidelines are established annually by the USDA



# National School Lunch Program (NSLP)

## Reimbursement Rates in the NSLP (2011 – 2012)

Category	Non-Severe Need	Severe Need
Free Lunch	\$2.77	\$2.79
Reduced-Price Lunch	\$2.37	\$2.39
Paid Lunch	\$ .26	\$ .28



# School Breakfast Program (SBP)

- ✓ Same participation criteria as NSLP
- ✓ Same income eligibility guidelines as NSLP



# School Breakfast Program (SBP)

## Reimbursement Rates in the SBP (2011 – 2012)

Category	Non-Severe Need	Severe Need
Free Breakfast	\$1.51	\$1.81
Reduced-Price Breakfast	\$1.21	\$1.50
Paid Breakfast	\$ .27	\$ .27



# After School Snack Program (ASSP)

- ✓ Similar participation criteria as NSLP and SBP
- ✓ Same income eligibility guidelines as NSLP
- ✓ School/site may qualify as “area eligible” if it is in an attendance area where 50% of students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals
- ✓ After school program requires an educational component



# After School Snack Program (ASSP)

## Reimbursement Rates in the ASSP (2011 – 2012)

Category	Non-Area Eligible	Area Eligible
Free Snack	\$ .76	\$ .76
Reduced-Price Snack	\$ .38	\$ .76
Paid Snack	\$ .07	\$ .76

# Seamless Summer Option (SSO) for Summer Meals

- ✓ SFAs participating in the NSLP are eligible to participate in the SSO
- ✓ SSO is an “extension” of the SBP and NSLP
- ✓ Same income eligibility guidelines as NSLP
- ✓ SSO may be operated in schools as well as various community sites that are convenient to limited resource communities
- ✓ Most meals are reimbursed at the free



# Special Milk Program (SMP)

- ✓ Provides cash subsidies for milk for SFAs that may not have access to other Child Nutrition Programs
- ✓ Income eligibility guidelines are the same as the SBP and the NSLP
- ✓ SFAs are reimbursed for every half pint of milk served to eligible students; the current reimbursement rate is \$ .2050



# Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program

- ✓ Available to elementary schools with the highest percentage of students eligible for free/reduced-price meals
- ✓ Provides free fruit or vegetable snacks for students during the instructional day (169 schools)
- ✓ Funds are allocated at a rate of \$50 - \$75 per pupil per year



# Determining Eligibility in the Child Nutrition Programs

Two processes are used to determine student eligibility in the Child Nutrition Programs:

(1) Categorical Eligibility

(2) Household application





# (1) Categorical Eligibility

## (65.5% of students in NC)

Automatic eligibility for free meals based on one of the following:

- ✓ Eligibility for Food and Nutrition Services, TANF or FDPIR
- ✓ Enrollment in Head Start Program
- ✓ Homeless
- ✓ Migrant
- ✓ Runaway
- ✓ Foster Child – responsibility of the State





# NC's System of Direct Certification

- ✓ An electronic data sharing system between the NC DHHS and NC DPI
- ✓ An electronic file containing names and other identifiers of students eligible for FNS is merged with the NC WISE student identification system
- ✓ Students who are “electronically matched” in the two systems are automatically eligible for free meal benefits



## (2) Household Application (36.4% of NC Students)

Application, at a minimum, must include:

- ✓ The names of all household members
- ✓ The amount and source of current gross income for all household members
- ✓ The signature of the adult household member
- ✓ The last four digits of the social security number of the adult household member or an indication that the adult household member does not have a social security number



## (2) Household Application

- ✓ The SFA's Determining Official reviews the application and determines eligibility based on income eligibility guidelines
- ✓ Some SFAs use eligibility software that tabulates income and electronically approves applications



# Student Eligibility in NC

(October 1, 2011)

- ✓ 1,497,525 enrolled in NC's SFAs
- ✓ 51.9% eligible for free/reduced-price meals
- ✓ 36.4% were approved based on a household application
- ✓ 63.5% were approved based on categorical eligibility
- ✓ 60% were approved based on NC's Direct Certification system
- ✓ 3.5% were categorically eligible based on other criteria

# Student Eligibility in NC

## (October 1, 2011)

- ✓ 321,402 household applications received
- ✓ 283,654 applications approved
- ✓ 37,748 (11.7%) denied meal benefits

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- ✓ 189,183 (58.9%) approved for free meal benefits
- ✓ 94,471 (29.4%) approved for reduced-price meal benefits

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